



PRESS RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

56th Fighter Wing
Office of Public Affairs
14185 W. Falcon St.
Luke AFB, AZ 85309-1629

Phone – (623) 856-5853
FAX – (623) 856-6013
After duty hours – (623) 856-5600
www.luke.af.mil

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
RELEASE # 001

Feb. 6, 2012

U.S. AIR FORCE TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR PROPOSED F-35A TRAINING AT LUKE AIR FORCE BASE

Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. — The U.S. Air Force encourages the public to attend public hearings to learn about and provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed establishment of a Pilot Training Center and associated basing of F-35A training aircraft at one or more existing Air Force or Air National Guard installations within the continental United States. Potential locations include the Boise Air Terminal Airport Air Guard Station, also known as Gowen Field, Idaho; Holloman Air Force Base, N.M.; Luke Air Force Base, Ariz.; and Tucson International Airport Air Guard Station, Ariz.

The Air Force's Preferred Alternative is to base the Pilot Training Center with 72 F-35A training aircraft at Luke Air Force Base. However, no decisions regarding the proposal will be made until after the environmental impact analysis process is complete.

Public Hearings: Four public hearings near Luke Air Force Base will be held to inform the public and receive public comments on the Draft EIS. All hearings include an open house information session from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., followed by a presentation and formal public comment session from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Representatives from the Air Force will be available during the open house session to provide information and to answer questions related to the Draft EIS.

Public hearings will be held:

Open House Information Session: 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Presentation/Formal Comment Session: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Date: Feb. 13, 2012

Location: The Wigwam, Wigwam Ballroom
300 E. Wigwam Blvd.
Litchfield Park, AZ 85340

Date: Feb. 14, 2012

Location: El Mirage Elementary School Gym
13500 N. El Mirage Road
El Mirage, AZ 85335

Date: Feb. 15, 2012

Location: Auditorium at Sundial Recreation Center
14801 N. 103rd Ave.
Sun City, AZ 85351

Date: Feb. 16, 2012

Location: Gila Bend Unified School District Cafeteria
308 N. Martin Ave.
Gila Bend, AZ 85337

Project Background: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Air Force prepared a Draft EIS to analyze any potential environmental impacts, including impacts associated with changes in personnel, construction and renovation of facilities, and training activities in existing military airspace, auxiliary airfields and ranges to support the proposed basing of the Pilot Training Center and training aircraft.

The purpose of the proposal is to train pilots and personnel to safely and effectively operate F-35A training aircraft. The F-35A is absolutely essential to the nation's security strategy. It is the newest and most advanced fifth-generation fighter and needed to deter and defeat 21st century threats. The basing of the F-35A Pilot Training Center and training aircraft is needed to support formal training requirements associated with the F-35A, which would replace or supplement the existing F-16 and A-10 aircraft and complement the F-22 aircraft. Training would include the use of existing training airspace and ranges, which permit flare countermeasures, supersonic flight and the use of munitions.

Document Access and Commenting Information: To download a copy of the Draft EIS and find additional information related to the Draft EIS, please visit the project website at **www.F-35ATrainingEIS.com**. A paper copy of the document is also available at the following public libraries:

El Mirage Branch Library
14011 N. 1st Ave.
El Mirage, AZ 85335

Litchfield Park Branch Library
101 W. Wigwam Blvd.
Litchfield Park, AZ 85340

Gila Bend Branch Library
202 N. Euclid
Gila Bend, AZ 85337

Sun City Branch Library
16828 N. 99th Ave.
Sun City, AZ 85351

Glendale Public Library
Main Branch
5959 W. Brown St.
Glendale, AZ 85302

Northwest Regional Library-
Surprise
16089 N. Bullard Ave.
Surprise, AZ 85374

Wickenburg Public Library
164 E. Apache St.
Wickenburg, AZ 85390

All comments on the Draft EIS must be postmarked or received by **March 14, 2012**, for consideration in the Final EIS. Written comments on the Draft EIS may be submitted to:

David Martin, Air Force Contractor, and Kim Fornof
HQ AETC/A7CPP
266 F Street West, Bldg. 901
Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4319
Fax: 210-652-5649
Email: aetc.a7cp.inbox@us.af.mil

Written and oral comments may also be submitted in person at the public hearings. A stenographer will be available for those wanting to submit an oral comment.

For More Information: For more information about the project, please contact David Martin, Air Force contractor, or Kim Fornof at 210-652-1961 or email aetc.a7cp.inbox@us.af.mil.

For media inquiries, please contact Capt Tristan Hinderliter, Public Affairs Officer, Luke Air Force Base at 623-856-7033.